

NTT goes cloud-first for a secure, fast and flexible future

Client profile

As part of NTT DATA, a USD 30 billion IT services provider, NTT Ltd. is a leading IT infrastructure and services company serving 65% of the Fortune Global 500 and more than 75% of the Fortune Global 100 companies. We lay the foundation for organizations' edge-to-cloud networking ecosystems, simplify the complexity of their workloads across multicloud environments, and innovate at the edge of their IT environments where networks, cloud and applications converge. We offer tailored infrastructure and ensure consistent best practices in design and operations across all our secure, scalable and customizable data centers.

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Summary

After a series of acquisitions powering global growth, NTT Ltd. needed to simplify and rationalize a diverse, complex digital landscape. In 2021, they embarked on a journey to transform the business by modernizing a multitude of core systems to secure, cloud-based architectures with a single operating model.

Their project team worked with Microsoft to design and build a standardized Azure platform for global NTT use, before analyzing and prioritizing over 20,000 workloads for migration.

Business need

Create a digital business with Azure

In 2019, NTT brought together 50,000 people across 31 operating companies to create a single organization. The goal was to drive optimal levels of digital client and employee experience, as well as ease the path to value through operational efficiency and speed-to-market.

However, none of that would be possible with the disparate legacy technology, processes and platforms bequeathed by 30 plus different organizations.

They decided to transform the business' digital platform with a cloud-first strategy that will see a majority of the workloads migrated to the Azure cloud.

The move to a standardized operating model would help align the underlying technology to the goals of the business. These included improving the experience they could offer clients by enabling teams to bring new, innovative capabilities to market faster. A standard architecture would also make it easier to deploy and support new platforms, optimize cloud costs, make compliance easier, and improve their security posture.

Solution

Building a foundation for business transformation

The initial focus was identifying the desired business outcomes and the key constraints that would shape the work. A significant part of this phase was understanding of the current costs associated with such a large footprint to deliver the business case. This footprint included over 25,000 servers, over 2,200 applications hosted in over 50 data centers, and over 1,500 hyperscaler cloud-based subscriptions globally.

Partnering with Microsoft, the project team focused on the Azure design and blueprint to ensure a standardized and consistent Azure platform would be used across NTT globally.

Network architecture is critical for an efficient, high performance multi-cloud world. The team addressed Azure connectivity upfront to simplify the connectivity architecture and ensure optimal efficiency.

Security was also a core focus for the team and they moved from a little over 20 operational security policies in Azure to over 200. Once the design and build phases were completed, they reviewed each workload during the discovery phase to ensure they were required and optimized to meet the business requirements.

The discovery and analysis phase were vital to making the migration phase easier. The project team spent much more time in the planning phase compared to the actual migration to ensure the process was smooth.

Migration strategy is a pivotal decision in cloud-first transformation projects. The options to lift and shift or replatform have to be evaluated depending on the business needs. With an aggressive timeline to decommission NTT cloud platform worldwide, the team settled on a migration strategy to lift and shift workloads.

As always, managing the business change and adoption to ensure all stakeholders have bought into the journey is important. The team engaged people across the business from the project's earliest days. These conversations were important to manage the change, especially those required in the security architecture. Having this stakeholder management plan in place prior to commencement of the cloud program was critical to their success

Outcomes

Improving operations with simple, streamlined multicloud

Their cloud-first modernization journey has enabled the business to rationalize and optimize their digital platform to create a better end user experience, improve security posture, achieve savings, and create a modern digital platform.

Modernizing infrastructure and increasing security

In one of the migration projects, they simplified their digital infrastructure in Australia by decommissioning 25% of their existing workloads and 450 virtual machines. The remainder are being migrated in a lift and shift approach, with all workloads now hosted in the Azure cloud.

This rationalization has reduced their technical debt and operational overheads, leading to better business outcomes, a reduced environmental footprint and greater visibility to uplift security.

Enabling business centricity

The new cloud-first operating model is delivering for their employees and clients. This enables unconstrained scale and performance with faster onboarding of new digital applications, and streamlined disaster recovery processes.

Improving governance and reducing cost

The move to a consumption-based model, with clearly defined financial metrics and controls to offer full visibility, has helped deliver substantial savings. They've been able to reduce monthly cloud costs in Australia alone by over USD 1 million by moving to a consumption-based model.

Setting the platform for further transformation

Cloud-first is the foundation for NTT's continued transformation and optimization, improving productivity and supercharging their new business models.

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